

# ILLINOIS AGRICULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Agriculture has always been a vital part of the lives of Illinois citizens and the economy of the state. Illinois is gifted with some of the richest agricultural resources in the world. The fertile soil, favorable climate, availability of excellent transportation via water, highway, rail and air, good marketing opportunities and a productive work force are some of the many resources that allow Illinois to be recognized as a world supplier of food, feed, and fiber. The variations in soil types, climate and topography in the state make it possible for Illinois farmers to produce a wide variety of agricultural commodities. Approximately 1,500 different soil types can be found in Illinois.

## **"VALUE ADDED" AGRICULTURE**

Food and agricultural product manufacturing and processing contribute significantly to Illinois' economy. Nationally, Illinois ranks among the leading states in the number of food and agricultural processing companies, including meat packing, soybean processing, dairy manufacturing, corn processing, feed milling, nursery products, vegetable processing and many others. Furthermore, Illinois ranks number one among all states in the production of ethanol. According to the Illinois Corn Growers Association, Illinois companies produce approximately 685 million gallons of ethanol annually from approximately 274 million bushels of corn.

## **AGRICULTURAL DIVERSITY**

The diversity in soil types allows farmers to grow many well known crops and lesser known specialty crops including alfalfa, amaranth, apples, bell peppers, blueberries, broccoli, buckwheat, canola, Christmas trees, clover, cucumbers, field corn, ginseng, grain sorghum, grass seed, herbs, horseradish, mushrooms, nursery products, oats, peaches, popcorn, potatoes, potted plants, pumpkins, rye, seed corn, snap beans, sod, soybeans, strawberries, sweet corn, tomatoes, winter wheat and others. Livestock is produced using a wide variety of methods ranging from one ostrich in a pen to thousands of hogs in total confinement production. Other agricultural animals raised include beef cattle, bees, bison, broilers, buffalo, catfish, crayfish, dairy cattle, deer, elk, emus, goats, horses, hybrid striped bass, layers, llamas, mink, minnows, rabbits, sheep, tilapia, turkeys and others.

## **FARMS AND LAND VALUES**

In 2003, there were 73,000 farms in Illinois that contained 27.5 million acres of land. The average size of the farms in 2003 was 377 acres. The average per acre value of farm real estate as of January 1, 2004, was \$2,610 per acre, compared to \$2,430 per acre on January 1, 2003.

## **COMMODITY PRODUCTION**

Illinois ranked second among all states in the production of corn and first in soybean production in 2003. Production of corn for grain during 2003 totaled 1.81 billion bushels, 21 percent more than produced in 2002, and the highest total ever produced in Illinois. The corn yield averaged a record high of 164 bushels per acre, 28 bushels per acre more than in 2002. Soybean production in 2003 totaled 374.1 million bushels, 18 percent lower than in 2002. The soybean yield in 2003 was 36.5 bushels per acre, 6.5 bushels below 2002.

In 2003, Illinois pork producers produced 1.83 billion pounds of pork, ranking Illinois fourth among all states. Pork production increased one percent from the previous year. Cattle and calf production during 2003 totaled 583.8 million pounds, two percent less than the production in 2002. Illinois ranked 19th in the United States in marketings of cattle and calves.

## **CASH RECEIPTS**

Total cash receipts from farm marketings in Illinois for 2003 totaled 8.29 billion dollars, seven percent above 2002. Illinois ranked 7th among all states in total cash receipts in 2003. Crop cash receipts in Illinois in 2003 totaled 6.49 billion dollars, up five percent from 2002 and placed Illinois third among all states in total crop cash receipts in 2003. Livestock and livestock products cash receipts in Illinois in 2003 totaled 1.8 billion dollars, which was up 16 percent from 2002 and placed Illinois 22nd among all states in total livestock and livestock products cash receipts in 2003.

In 2003, corn accounted for 39.3 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois and soybeans accounted for 30.9 percent. All other crops combined accounted for 8.1 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois. Compared to 2002, cash receipts for corn increased one percent and cash receipts for soybeans increased nine percent.

In 2003, hogs accounted for 10.1 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois while cattle and calves accounted for 7.3 percent and dairy products accounted for 3.0 percent. All other livestock combined accounted for 1.3 percent of the total cash receipts in Illinois in 2003. Compared to 2002, cash receipts rose 17 percent for hogs, 2 percent for dairy, and 20 percent for cattle.